

# THE BEREANS

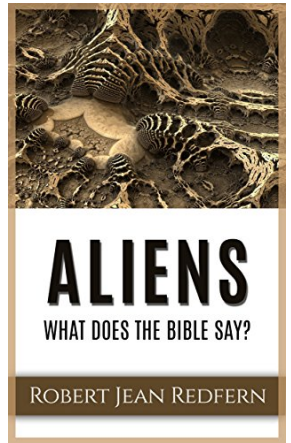
ACTS 17:11

**1 Peter 1:1-2**  
**Lesson #4**  
**Aliens**  
**08/30/2020**

Are Christians more  
 interested in cosmic  
 aliens than cultural  
 aliens?

*1 Peter*

has a lot to  
 teach us about  
 aliens.



1



*1 Peter*

*Operations Manual for  
 Alien Ambassadors  
 in a broken world*

**Aliens**

1. Stay "homesick".
2. Don't drink the "Kool-Aid".
3. Ask "WWJD?".

2

**Two of life's biggest challenges  
 for disciples of Christ**

1.  
 Sensing God's love at a  
 level that gives us real  
 peace, power, and  
 perseverance.

2.  
 Living as sojourners and  
 aliens in this world without  
 becoming seduced by and  
 aligned with its values.

3

*1 Peter*

*Operations Manual for Alien  
 Ambassadors in a fallen world*

This is who we  
 are "in Christ"

This is how we should  
 express our identity

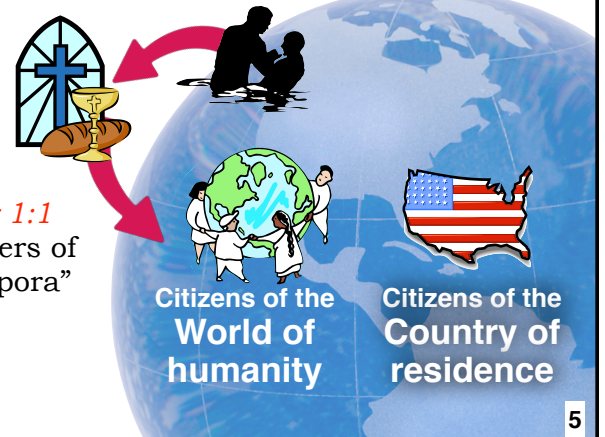
	Indicative	Imperative				
"chosen"	Salvation	Sanctification	In the church		Shepherding	
Introduction			Submission		Suffering	Conclusion
"aliens"			In the world			
1:1-2	1:3-12	1:13-2:10	2:11-3:12	3:13-4:19	5:1-11	5:12-14

Christians are called out of the world — and then sent back into the world.

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*1 Peter 1:1*  
 "chosen"

*1 Peter 1:1*  
 "sojourners of  
 the diaspora"



Citizens of the  
 World of  
 humanity

Citizens of the  
 Country of  
 residence

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### John 17

“15 I do not ask Thee to take them out of the world, but to **keep them from the evil one**. 16 They are not of the world, even as I am not of the world. 17 Sanctify them in the truth; Thy word is truth. 18 **As Thou didst send Me** into the world, I also have sent them into the world.”

**Is being conformed to this world the biggest hindrance to God's people being salt and light in it?**

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### 1 Peter 1

“1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who are chosen and **aliens**, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, 2 according to the **foreknowledge** of God the Father, by the **sanctifying** work of the Spirit, that you may **obey** Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure.”

### Aliens (Sojourners) saints

are temporarily residing in but not in sync with this world's hopes, values, and priorities as they obey Christ.

**What should characterize Christian Aliens?**



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### 1. Aliens stay homesick while in this world.

*Romans 8:23*

“And not only this, but also we ourselves, having the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves **groan within ourselves, waiting eagerly** for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our body.”

- Aliens long for a fellowship, understanding, peace, joy and sense of well-being **that this world cannot provide.**

*Romans 8:18*

“For I consider that the sufferings of this present time are **not worthy to be compared with the glory that is to be revealed to us.**”

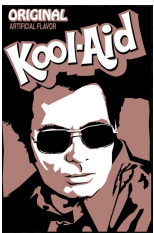
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### Implications

1. Aliens should not lose their **longings for full and abundant life.**
2. Aliens should not **expect** to have those longings met in this fallen world.
3. Aliens should not be **surprised** at being misunderstood, marginalized and disrespected in this world.
4. Aliens should be prepared to **respond** as Jesus responded when mistreated.
5. Aliens should not expect a **cultural reformation** before Christ returns.

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### 2. Aliens don't drink the Kool-Aid of this world.



- Nov. 18, 1978 Jonestown, Guyana / Jim Jones' Peoples Temple, / 900 mass suicide via cyanide-laced Kool-Aid.
- Aliens refuse to be seduced by and aligned with the false hopes of this world.

*Romans 12:2*

“And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.”

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### 1 John 2:16

“For all that is in the world, the **lust of the flesh** and the **lust of the eyes** and the boastful **pride of life**, is not from the Father, but is from the world.”

1. The lust of the flesh - **bodily appetites.**
2. The lust of the eye - **social image.**
3. The pride of life - **worldly power.**

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### Matthew 4

#### The lust of the flesh.

“<sup>2</sup> And after He had fasted forty days and forty nights, He then became hungry. <sup>3</sup> And the tempter came and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread.” <sup>4</sup> But He answered and said, “It is written, ‘**Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.**’”

- **The Poison** - Belief that this world can satisfy our soul's deepest longings.
- **Examples** - Creature comforts, intimate relationships, material wealth, good health, social security & respect, adventure, etc.

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### Matthew 4

#### The lust of the eye.

“<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took Him into the holy city; and he had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup> and said to Him, “If You are the Son of God throw Yourself down; for it is written, ‘*He will give His angels charge concerning You*’; and ‘*On their hands they will bear You up, Lest You strike Your foot against a stone.*’” <sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, “On the other hand, it is written, ‘**You shall not put the Lord your God to the test.**’”

- **The Poison** - We have **freedom and a right** to cash in on the world's “goodies”.
- **Example** - God promises to make **OUR** dreams come true if we trust and obey.

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### Matthew 4

#### The pride of life.

“<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took Him to a very high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world, and their glory; <sup>9</sup> and he said to Him, “All these things will I give You, if You fall down and worship me.” <sup>10</sup> Then Jesus said to him, “Begone, Satan! For it is written, ‘**You shall worship the Lord your God, and serve Him only.**’”

- **The Poison** - The ends justify the means. If it **works for me now**, it's of God.
- **Example** - Placing faith, hope, and love **in this world's** political power, government, American uniqueness, self service.

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## Implications

1. Jesus lived his life with the **big picture and eternity** in mind.
2. Jesus saw both God's gifts and purposes as **a sacred stewardship**.
3. Jesus saw the **means** as a part of the ends.
4. Jesus was willing to **bear a cross** on his way to a resurrection and new life.

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### 3. Aliens do what Jesus did as a witness to the true hope.

#### Matthew 22:21

“Then render to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and to God the things that are God's.”

The context of this statement was the poll-tax to Caesar (a days wage for every adult, to fund the Roman gov.). It led to the origin of the Zealot party in Judaism and **reveals a lot about Jesus' teaching on political action in the face of injustice.**

**NOTE:** In a government of, by, and for the people we render to Caesar our voice, vote, and virtue **but not our faith and hope.**

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“The United States is a nation with the soul of a church.”

G.K. Chesterton  
1874-1936

**Up until the Civil War, America's identity with Christianity was generally accepted as a fact,**

Christian Nation

Pluralistic state

1776

1865

2020

**even though the constitution deliberately avoided identification with Christianity.**

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In 1864 a Christian group in Xenia, Ohio proposed the following amendment to the U.S. CONSTITUTION:

“We, the people of the United States,  
(**recognizing the being and attributes of Almighty God, the Divine authority of the Holy Scriptures, the law of God as the paramount rule, and Jesus, the Messiah, the Savior and Lord of all**) in order to form a more perfect union, . . .”

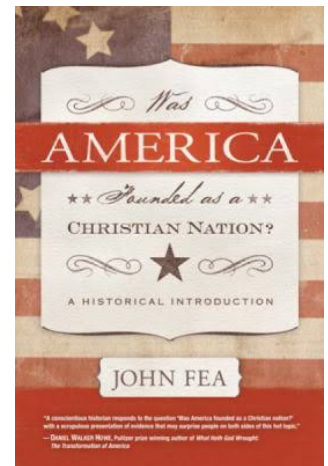
**It was rejected.**

John Fea, “Was America Founded as a Christian Nation?” p.23

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John Fea  
Chair of the History  
Department at  
Messiah College.



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## For more material on church and state [apptoteach.org](http://apptoteach.org)

**Hard Questions** Lesson #49  
“**Culture and Perspective**”

**Hot Topics**

- Church and State
- How to read the Old Testament Lesson #17  
“**Church and State**”
- Ethics Lessons #34, 35, 36, 37, 38, 39  
“**Politics and witness**”

**Bible Insights**

- Romans Lesson #42  
“**Rendering to Caesar**”

**Theology** #202, #807

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## Different postures (taken by Christians interacting with the world)

**Show**  
kingdom  
values to  
the world.

**Shun**  
the culture  
as it is  
beyond help.

**Submit**  
to the culture  
as it is the  
hand of God.

**Subdue**  
the culture  
by making it  
Christian.

**Synergize**  
with the culture  
to combine  
all truth.



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## How does each posture see America?

- **Submit** - American culture is God’s voice.
- **Subdue** - America is a disobedient Christian state that must be reformed.
- **Synergize** - America is a guest house for heaven.
- **Shun** - American culture is an unredeemable state to be avoided.
- **Show** - America is a background for kingdom salt and light.

**Alien status seems to best fit this last model.**



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## Christian alien’s don’t place their hope and faith in

Political  
power

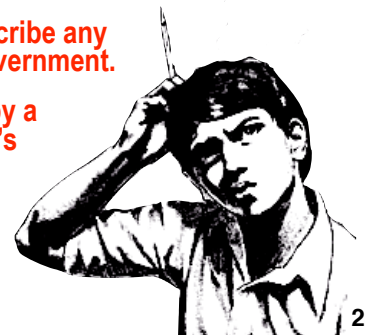
Human  
government

American  
uniqueness

The Bible does not prescribe any one FORM of human government.

America does not occupy a SPECIAL PLACE in God’s kingdom.

Kingdom POWER is not political, military, or economic.



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## Some “American” values should expose Christians as aliens.

- **Narcissism** - God’s plan is for my personal happiness.
- **Pragmatism** - If it works it must be of God.
- **Power** is political, material wealth, and position.
- **Competition** makes everything better.
- **Democracy** - Majority rule.
- **Success** is defined by material and monetary growth and size.



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## In communist countries the state forces the church to propagate state values. In America we do so willingly.



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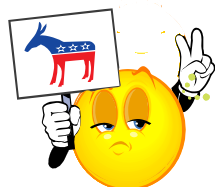


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## The religious left is tempted to:



- Give the state a Messianic role in the life of people. **"The state functions as savior."**
- Define the human dilemma in material terms. **"Save bodies not souls."**
- Promote community apart from the Spirit of Christ. **"Ethics is an economic & individual rights issue."**
- See the poor as (primarily) victims of the greedy rich and a capitalistic system that takes unfair advantage of the poor. **"The poor need a hand and a handout."**
- Look down their nose at the political right. **"Conservatives are selfish, materialistic, intolerant, and evil."**

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## The religious right is tempted to:



- Make uncritical nationalism a sacred calling. **"America has got it right."**
- Define God's blessing in terms of the American dream. **Kingdom values get confused with personal, temporal / material blessing.**
- Confront select personal sins only. **"God's blessings come when we remove abortion, and sexual immorality, while we support Israel and resist socialism."**
- See the poor as (primarily) lazy and irresponsible who could change their state if they would only work harder, and smarter. **"The poor only need opportunity."**
- Demonize the left. **"Political liberals are always naive and usually (always) power hungry, wrong, and probably not Christians."**

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**Both sides share some things in common:**



- They let American core values set the agenda. "It's all about this life, material wealth, political power and our rights to it."



- They are convinced that the solutions are in the end, political. "It's all about social systems and power."
- They tie their politics to their theology. "God is on OUR side!" never asking "Is God on our side?" or better yet "Are we on God's side?"
- They are more committed to being "understood by" rather than "trying to understand" the other side. "We don't need or care to hear about your ideas."
- They demonize the other side. "We are the only ones addressing the real issues with the right motives, and workable solutions."

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The extreme religious **left**  
wants the kingdom  
before its time  
**and without its King.**

The extreme religious **right**  
wants the kingdom  
before its time  
**and without its Spirit.**

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The evangelical center  
wants the kingdom  
with the Spirit  
and the King  
in its time

**but is too attached,  
anxious & angry with  
the things of this age  
while it waits.**

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**Rules of engagement with the world**

1. Stay in touch with your real home - **read letters from home (N.T.) often.**
2. Don't lose sight of your true hope - **store up true (not false) treasure while on earth.**
3. Be salt & light in the world without cultivating **a taste for this world's sugar & glitter.**
4. Real systemic change starts with **reformed personal attitudes and values.**
5. Be realistic in your expectations - **bearing your cross with grace, patience, and compassion.**
6. Study Jesus' example - **as he faced injustice, pain, rejection, misunderstanding, etc.**

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